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LETTERS

I want to add my voice to those eastern RTN readers in dismay and protest at the proposal to revive a transcontinental CZ route. Rail passenger revival has to have some sort of priority and it seems that first priority should be bringing up to an acceptable level service on lines now in running order. "Come East and Ride a P-70" could be a motto, as you see enough of these cars running in the corridor. The stainless stell equipment is often not much better, having mulfunctioning A/C and parts. If new services are to be added, I can also think of some deserving city pairs with great potential: New York-Pittsburgh, Washington-Pittsburgh, New York-Cleveland, Inland Route thru trains, a day train Vermont-Northeast Corridor, as well as, say, a network of intercity trains in the Midwest. I'd give all these a higher priority than a thru CZ train that robs the poorly-equipped Eastern trains.

George E. Lerrigo, Vice Chairman
Vermont Association of Railroad Passengers

North Bennington, Vermont

It seems to me that a total reinstitution of the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR would be a little irrational. To operate this train for a few passengers that might happen to ride thru the Feather River Canyon or the Colorado Rockies could in no way justify the massive amount of new or totally reconditioned equipment required.

Regardless of what many say, speed and total comfort are still and will always be the order of the day. Routing a transcontinental train over a route that has very little trackage capable of operation above 45mph except in short spurts to 70mph, or serving an area, say Grand Junction to Salt Lake City that has so few inhabitants one wonders why it was even created (is irrational).

Roger L. Robertson

Arvada, Colorado

The CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR revival is a great idea, but it just doesn't need a collection of junk equipment out of the past. If it's justified by popular demand, then Amtrak should equip it with some of their new equipment.

Robert T. Clark

N. Port Charlotte, Florida

The CZ controversy is generating an important debate about the market for rail passenger service. Mr. van Wormer's eloquent plea for the densely populated East (LETTERS, last issue) deserves attention, but is based upon a dangerous oversimplification--dangerous because it appears that Amtrak President Reistrup may have the same idea. This is the assumption that a map of population density is a sufficient guide to potential rail patronage. Not so. Other variables operate, and in my estimation play more important roles. Among these variables are: the motive for the journey (work, shopping, relaxation, etc.), ease of access to/from point of origin, and (especially) destination. Short-run "corridor" or "hinterland" trains seem to attract patrons when they converge on old, centralized cities which offer destinations concentrated downtown and/or efficient local distributors--Boston, New York, Montreal, Toronto, Chicago, and of course the British and European metropoli. But how many such cities, Chicago aside, exist in the Old Midwest? The ability to stage a short-run rail comeback in an area of decentralized cities remains to be proven. Long-distance cruiseliners, on the other hand, are themselves the attraction, and therefore serve a different market which will pay higher fares. It may well be that a CZ would draw heavy loads at high fares while a Detroit-Ann Arbor-Kalamazoo hourly service at low fares would starve, since it would be competing in a different market.

Fred H. Matthews

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

When Amtrak took over on May 1, 1971, I wondered what the Corporation's policy on parlor car travel would be. As far as I know, no official pronouncement has been made. Actions speak louder than words, however, so let us consider Amtrak's record in this area.

Amtrak has virtually eliminated parlor cars on all "medium distance" runs outside the Northeast Corridor. Even the Boston-Washington line has suffered cutbacks in its allocation of parlor cars. Despite the French manufacturer's disappointment, Amtrak refused to order first class accommodations for the new turbo trains. The forthcoming Metroliner "shell" cars will have no "club" sections. Examine Amtrak's advertising over the past four years and it becomes apparent that the Corporation is interested in promoting coach travel exclusively. Not that long before Amtrak's takeover, the Santa Fe was advertising the SUPER CHIEF's amenities in such sophisticated publications as the New Yorker. Does Amtrak feel that this clientele is no longer interested in rail travel?

The elimination of a distinctive service such as the parlor car that has traditionally made train travel unique, would result in placing the railroad on a par with the bus. While the primary purpose of corridor travel is to move masses of people quickly and efficiently between major urban areas, this can be accomplished with an added element of style for those who desire the service.

Christopher H. Anderson

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

I'll add my two cents worth to the discussion now going on in your pages concerning new passenger equipment, amenities to be provided, etc.

Amtrak would do well to send a team to Sweden and observe the conveniences offered on the crack trains of that country. In one corner of a coach is space with a coat hanger rack and a shelf for hats; the floor space is used for rubbers, boots, etc. Thus there is no need for stuffing outerware in the overhead racks or under your seat. As in aircraft, there is a light over the door to the toilets to indicate occupancy (red) or vacancy (green). A simple device that saves the frustrating walk the length of the car only to find the toilet occupied!

Why have so many of the cars built during the last several years been provided with doors at only one end? Why not at both ends as they used to be and which is the sensible way to build passenger cars? Since we do have these "one-end" cars, why is it that, when two of them are coupled with door ends adjacent, only one door is ever opened even at the busiest station stops? Is this due to some idiotic work rule? Or are trainmen just too lazy to bother opening the door in the adjoin-

(continued on page 18)

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ON THE COVER

(Front cover) The COAST STARLIGHT that left Seattle on June 1 sits a few blocks south of the Chehalis, WA station, having been turned to head back north after a freight derailment on BN blocked its passage. See Jim Russell's story in this issue.

(Rear cover) The former CP Rail steamship "Princess Marguerite" awaits its inaugural trip from Seattle on June 2. See story in this issue by Glenn Lee & Jim Russell.

COMING UP

NEXT ISSUE: Results of the RTN reader ratings of American passenger trains. Don't miss this first-time event that may become a regular feature!

LATER ISSUES: American Freedom Train; Amtrak's next experimental route; First-hand rider reports of contemporary trains. Be with us for all the exciting news and features coming up regularly!

PC Splits the Corridor

by Alan Crossley

For five days last December Penn Central closed the Connecticut River draw-bridge at Old Saybrook for repairs, forcing schedule changes and supplemental service along Amtrak's Boston-New York Shore Line. Now, from May 17-23, further repairs were to close the bridge and split the corridor again. As it did last December, Amtrak substituted buses for the trains between New London and New Haven with three exceptions: daily Nos. 171/172 and 66/67, which were rerouted via Hartford with buses protecting the Boston-New Haven shore stops; and the weekend Harrisburg train 46/47, which was bus-only from New Haven east. Amtrak also suspended parlor car service east of New Haven except for the rerouted 171/172.

Sunday morning May 18 was warm and offered a good opportunity for a bicycle visit to New London's Union Station, so I pedalled over from nearby Groton, arriving at 11:30. The next scheduled departures were the eastbound EAST WIND (168) at 11:50 and the SOUTHERN CRESCENT bus (171) westbound at 11:53, giving me a comfortable quarter-hour to look around. Turbo 56/57 (the power dome car numbers) whined impatiently at the north end of the station on the eastbound main, echoed by Turbo 52-53 on the same track at the opposite end of the platform. E8 301 and four cars faced north on a nearby siding, and out in front four in-touch-with-America Greyhound charters lined the station curb, waiting.

But not for long. Greyhound had done well with the passengers from New Haven, especially considering the intermediate stop at Old Saybrook--two busloads for the EAST WIND pulled up at 11:46 with a third only four minutes behind. Passengers in the station were called simultaneously for the 11:53 CRESCENT departure, but there was no real confusion, as loading and unloading buses were kept well apart. Amtrak and Greyhound reps and train crew members were also out front to direct traffic.

At 11:53 precisely, three Americruisers roared off for New Haven. Not all were needed for the passengers from New London, of course, but presumably the equipment would be needed at the other end--a ticket agent told me the operation was using 20-25 buses. The EASTWIND was soon set for departure and left at 11:57. A good team effort with minimal delay, I thought, and the Turbo would easily be able to make up the lost minutes. The only further action was the bus covering 171's Boston New Haven stops--it was in and out at 12:15. Apparently this wouldn't be delaying 171 at New Haven, however, for the agent told me that trains run through Hartford were generally losing about 40 minutes. He wasn't sure even, why the CRESCENT was being run inland, except for the checked baggage which might have been difficult to transfer twice.

I left for lunch shortly afterward, but returned at 5:30 to find things still going smoothly. Two sets of conventional equipment and Turbo 50-51 (which had broken down in sight of the station on its stint at 177 but which was now repaired) were parked near the station awaiting assignment. Next out was a third conventional train--two E8's, four ex-NH MBTA (Boston) commuter cars and a PC snack coach--which would be the eastbound STATESMAN scheduled out at 5:48. At 5:44 the train was announced to those waiting in the station while outside the first of seven Greyhounds was rolling in to unload. The full complement had arrived by 5:48 and the transfer proceeded briskly--the engineer got the highball at 5:55, a delay, again, of only seven minutes.

I stayed for one more train, the westbound MERCHANTS (179), which was due out of New London at 6:15. Though reported several minutes late out of Providence, Turbo 56-57 had been able to gain time on the conventional schedule and blasted in at 6:12. Once more the interfacing went well as a full train-

load of passengers surged for the buses, which had boarded the last of them and packed off for New Haven by 6:22. Another conventional train, meanwhile (this one with some refurbished cars), had been readied on the eastbound main for a scheduled 7:45 pullout at 176, the SENATOR.

Sunday crowds had given the operation a good trial, I felt, and the cooperation I had seen impressed me. And when I talked to station personnel I learned further that transfer-related delays had been small all day, though one train had been delayed for other reasons on its way here from Boston. Greyhound was putting its best foot forward, certainly--only one of the 15 or so buses I saw was not one of its newest--and at times the rail equipment suffered by comparison. And though the buses covering the rail stops from Boston to New Haven were understandably late, the Hound was making embarrassingly good time (obeying 55 mph limits?) New Haven-New London. (The buses need no time-consuming engine change at New Haven, to be sure, but offsetting that is the long walk--perhaps 70 yards including stairs--required of transferring passengers.) Still, Amtrak was out there with lots of personnel, with all its Eastern Turbos, with food service on every train, and with, in general, a sure-handed approach. It was good to see.

(See photo of Amtrak train 171 on page 10. Photo by Daniel Sage.)

SOUTHERN RAILWAY PASSENGER CUTS ALLOWED

The Interstate Commerce Commission decided on May 21 to allow Southern Railway to discontinue the PIEDMONT between Atlanta and Charlotte. The train will continue to run daily between Charlotte and Washington DC, leaving Charlotte at 10am and reaching DC at 7:25pm; leaving DC at 10:45am and reaching Charlotte at 8pm. The SOUTHERN CRESCENT becomes tri-weekly between Atlanta and Birmingham; it continues tri-weekly Birmingham-New Orleans, and daily Washington-Atlanta. Tri-weekly trains 3&4 Salisbury NC-Asheville NC will continue to run pending a decision by the state PUC. The ICC said its order was to take effect 35 days after the May 21 decision date. However, the railway has indicated a June 1 effective date forthese changes.

THREAT OF RAIL STRIKE HANGS OVER NATION'S TRAVELERS

It happens nearly every summer: rail travel plans are shaken by the threat of a nationwide walkout. This time, union members will be free to strike on June 18, when President Ford's 60-day delay expires.

RAIL AND BUS FARE INCREASES ANNOUNCED

Amtrak announced on June 2 that it will raise Western first class fares by 10%, effective July 1. These increases affect all trains west of Chicago where first class service is available, including the LONE STAR and INTER-AMERICAN. The NATIONAL LIMITED is affected west of Kansas City. In the Northeast Corridor, Amtrak is adding a 50¢ charge to coach travel, $1 to parlor car, $1 to Metrocoach, and $2 to Metroclub travel. Interstate bus lines got a quick, quiet approval of a nationwide fare increase from the ICC which took effect immediately May 30. The rise is 10%.

AMTRAK REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS TO TAKE OVER

Amtrak has announced the names of the four VP's to head the four regions into which the nationwide system is divided, under Reistrup's reorganization plan. The Eastern region is under John S. Piet, formerly Superintendent of Western Region operations, and earlier with the PC; he's been with Amtrak since 1972. The South is under Joe G. Matthews, formerly Director of the Southeast Region. He has also been Amtrak Director of Congressional Affairs, President of Trailways Bus Co., and Ass't UP with the AAR. C. James Taylor takes over Central region. He comes from the Rock Island, where he was VP and Controller, and in railroads since 1953. The West is headed by Neal D. Owen, who leaves his job as Mgr. of Train Operations in the Office of Operations Planning of the USRA. Before that, he was with Amtrak in 1973-4 as Ass't Mgr of Passenger Services and Station Services, and earlier with the Milwaukee Road. The men will all be under David Watts, VP & Gen Mgr of Line Operations, in Washington.

Last Ride on an Unreorganized Amtrak

By James Russell

Without a doubt, one of the most fantastic travel treats in North America is the steamship ride between Seattle and Victoria on the "Princess Marguerite." We say this from recent personal experience, and recommend all who can to try it. The story of how we got from here to Seattle is another matter, which we shall now relate.

An engraved invitation appeared in our mail box recently: "The Honourable Robert Williams, Minister of Lands, Forests, and Water Resources of the Province of British Columbia requests the honour of your presence at a reception honouring the Inaugural Run of the Princess Marguerite on Sunday, June 1, 1975, at 5pm on board the ship at Pier 48 in Seattle." The hand of RTN contributor Glenn Lee was evident in this. As regular readers will know, Glenn was extremely active in the move to get B.C. to take over the ship when CP Rail abruptly dropped it last fall. Glenn described himself as the "token Yank" on the restoration committee, and got us an invitation to be aboard for the first run.

We realized that we had not ridden the COAST STARLIGHT to the Northwest since it had gained the status of a "Premier" train a few years back. And shortly Amtrak would announce its regional reorganization plan which would mean new and hopefully improved management of regional operations. For all these reasons, we set out to Seattle, on a press pass graciously supplied by Amtrak's Public Relations Dept., to get a last feeling for riding the STARLIGHT in the pre-Reistrup-reorganization era.

The night of May 31 we boarded Amtrak sleeper "Pine Creek," the last car on the 13-car STARLIGHT at Oakland, and stored our few belongings in a middle-of-the-car room (thoughtfully reserved for us by Home Office). Ahead of us was the other sleeper, "Pine Cavern," diner 8031, lounge 3393, and the big coach section. Our first impression, which held throughout the trip, was that this train is doing a lot of business even here in the off-season.

Everything went smoothly and our car rode very nicely, affording us the best first-night-out sleep on the rails that we can remember. No need to rise early--just rest and enjoy the ride. We did that until we awakened early in the morning and realized that we were leaving Klamath Falls a half hour late. We retained that lateness all the way to the end of the SP section at Portland. It appeared that we we slowed for the passage of freight trains.

Ironically, it happened that we would have made better time had we been an hour late, or even 45mins late, into Portland. We moved quickly out of the Rose City, now on BN tracks, and came to a halt at the Vancouver, WA station just across the Columbia River--in fact, our last car was still on the railroad bridge. The time was 2pm. The weather was very warm for the Northwest at this time of year--around ninety. We sat and sat and didn't leave. Finally, the word filtered down to our car that a freight had derailed ahead of us, blocking both tracks. We were stuck. Had we been a little later, word would have gotten to us in Portland, where better facilities for alternate travel arrangements were available.

A few passengers got off and walked around the little Vancouver station. There were a few newspapers on a rack, which were quickly snatched up (Amtrak supplied no reading material aboard the train, except the little brochure, "The Amtrak Era", placed in the sleeping car rooms.) There was no public telephone. Several people bought more cold drinks from the lounge, in case the ice ran out in the heat. The

dining car had quickly heated up to an unbearable degree--about 120° in the kitchen and 100 in the dining section. We sat for one hour, ten minutes without knowing for sure what was happening or what would be our travel fate.

All manner of rumors abounded: that we would be bused to Seattle; that we would be bused to Centralia; that we would return to Portland; that we would be flown to our destinations; that we would wait for the track to be cleared, etc., etc. No one seemed to know what was happening, and while the crew were courteous and tried to be helpful, they knew as little as the passengers did. There seemed to be general knowledge among the passengers that Amtrak would somehow provide for their welfare, but many of them were left anxious, not knowing what would happen. One thing was certain for us--we would miss the "Princess Marguerite" reception that was to start in Seattle just before our scheduled 5:20pm arrival there.

At 3:10 we started moving at last. The brakeman said that it was decided to move the train on to Kelso, the last station south of the derailment scene. By this time a small knot of railfans and some of the more aggressive non-railfan passengers had established an informal communication network among themselves with some information and misinformation garnered from crew members. We learned that the train would be wyed near Kelso in order to become that day's southbound train, that the southbound train stalled on the other side of the wreck scene would likewise be turned, and that passengers would be bused between the two trains to continue their journeys.

We started around the wye, thru a freight yard near Kelso. Crew members said it was the first time a passenger train was thru there since about 1943 (see photos on p. 10). We moved very slowly, crossing an old bridge in the process. Then the long train backed up across the bridge and slowly out onto the main line. As we were maneuvering, a BN freight came tearing down the mainline, without a caboose, heading south. It was the remnant of the train that had derailed ahead of us. Someone commented that the heavy Amtrak engines were untried on the old bridge, and that we were fortunate they hadn't ended up in the drink.

By this time the weather had turned more pleasant. A delightful breeze off the Columbia River had lowered the thermometer to around 75. We backed gingerly up the main line, and stopped at the Kelso station at 4:45. Waiting passengers looked surprised at our reverse move into the station. Almost at once, buses began arriving, chartered from local companies. Then it was everyone off with his luggage, and line up and jam onto the buses. There were four altogether, and when filled there were numerous standees jammed in. This operation took 45 minutes. At 5:30 the first bus pulled away and moved out onto the freeway for a 45-minute trip. It was the general belief that we were being bused to Centralia, the next regular stop. Some still thought we might go all the way to Seattle. There were many unkind words for Amtrak aboard the buses. If anyone thought the train ride unpleasant, it was now obvious that the bus was sheer torture. A group of passengers who had been having a jolly party in the train lounge, finding themselves jammed together in the bus aisle, now were impelled into loud, raucous song. One man near us sat the whole 45 minutes holding his ears closed with his index fingers.

To our surprise, the bus pulled off the freeway at Chehalis, no longer a passenger stop. After getting lost in town for awhile, the driver found the old station and pulled up. It took a while for all four buses to arrive and unload. In the last bus was the engine crew from our train, who were to take over the new consist that was idling several blocks south of the station (see cover photo). A Chehalis police car picked up the crew and brought them down to the train. The time was now 6:40.

In another 10 minutes the train was pulling up to the station, and the passengers, who had once more located their luggage, were boarding. Everyone took the same accommodations they had on the first train. We were again in the last sleeper, "Pine Rapids." Ahead of it was sleeper "Silver Ravine" and diner 8034. The train was warm and stuffy from waiting in the sun with power shut off. We now had a new crew, tho the same trainmen.

We left Chehalis at 7:07, hit Tacoma at 8:18, and finally reached Seattle at 9:20pm, exactly four hours late. After we left Chehalis, we thought about dinner, which we would have had at the Seattle reception. We figured Amtrak owed us a free dinner, keeping us aboard this long. We went to the diner and inquired (a porter told us he would find out, but we never heard from him). Sure enough, the dinners were on the house.

There was no general announcement of the dinner arrangements. Indeed, there was no general announcement of ANYTHING on the trip. In fact, there was no one whose job it was to make announcements. There were no facilities for making announcements. In fact, NO ONE KNEW WHAT TO ANNOUNCE. It was chaos, but the passengers kept their cool pretty well.

Not every passenger got a free meal--only those who came into the diner expecting to pay for dinner. The dining car crew were less than enthusiastic about the dinner arrangements. The kitchen was boiling hot. There were no fistfights. There were, however, verbal exchanges between crew and passengers that one would not expect in a normal, civilized restaurant. It was embarrassing. The dining car crew performed very sloppily and grudgingly. At least one of them seemed to be suffering physically from heat, and his memory and coordination were failing him.

After this experience, we were pleased to receive an Amtrak press release dated June 6, announcing that th4 corporation is establishing a training program to "update and upgrade the skills of all 1600 service employees who work on the trains." And also, Amtrak said it will issue a "printed statement of welcome to its passengers that will inform them of the services they can expect to receive from employees."

A welcome to passengers is badly needed. It's incredible that at this late date none are given out on trains. A passenger boarding an Amtrak train is on his own, and there's nobody responsible for his welfare or caring enough to inform him of even such simple things as the time that meals will be served and whether reservations are necessary.

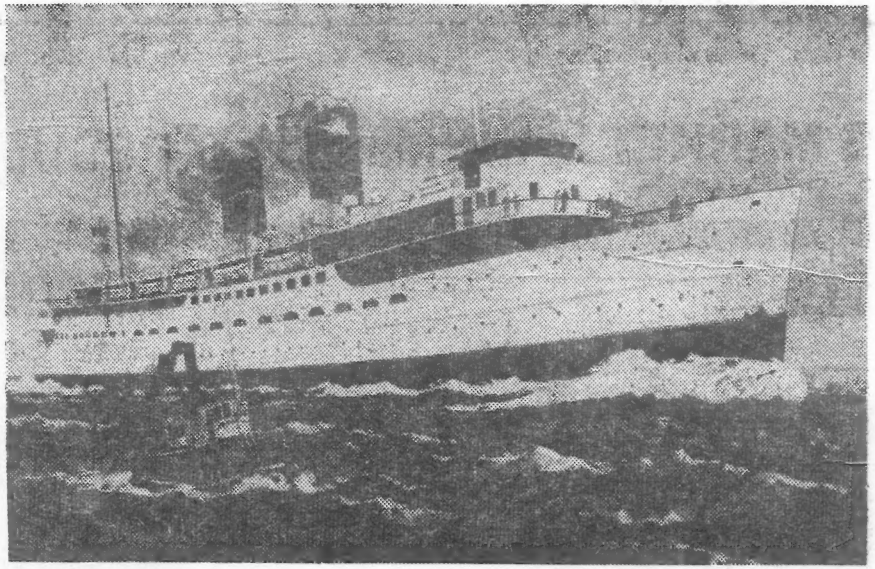
What is needed even more is some on-board representative with authority to supervise the service employees and keep things organized and take responsibility for the welfare of passengers. On our train there were a number of people attempting to make the connection from Seattle to Vancouver. They spent hours wondering whether the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL would be held for them. They didn't know who to ask, and when they did ask someone--a porter, perhaps--they would get a courteous and cheery but unknowledgeable and basically irresponsible reply. There really was no one who felt the responsibility of keeping passengers informed about travel questions of vital interest to them. The conductor was the only person who apparently knew what was happening during our shuttle, and it was impossible for him to answer 200 questions and perform his other duties as well.

Aboard our train was a middle-aged woman from Southern California traveling to see her mother in Canada. It was the first time she had traveled without her family, and she had chosen the train because of its roominess and security, and because a bad incident with buses had left her very fearful of travel on them. This woman spent many hours in anxiety because no one could tell her whether she would be bused to Vancouver, or whether she could arrange to stay overnight to catch the next day's train, etc. It seems that it would be so easy for Amtrak to provide communication with individual passengers, to allay any doubts and questions they might have, that it's difficult to understand why it isn't done.

The derailment, incidentally, was caused by a sun kink in the welded rail, we were told. Eighteen cars went off thetrack. On the return trip we watched for the derailment scene, which was near a siding called Vader, south of Chehalis. We looked out the rear door of the train at the rail disappearing behind us. The gauge kept changing as the rails wiggled from one side to the other. Our car lurched sideways as it careened down the curving BN track, with an occasional bang from the underpinnings. We made it back to Oakland 4 minutes early. It was an exciting last taste of travel in Amtrak's unreorganized era. We wondered what the changes coming up would do.

The Princess is Back!

BY GLENN LEE & JIM RUSSELL



Victoria's Party of the Year might well have been labeled a "Steamship Party." For 1200 invited guests, including most of the top officials of the British Columbia government, festivities began 12 noon on Sunday, June 1 at the Victoria Inner Harbour. It was immediately apparent that Auntie Mame and Holly Golightly had nothing on the B.C. crowd when it came to throwing a remarkable bash as the "Princess Marguerite" made her inaugural run to Seattle.

After short remarks by B.C. Premier Dave Barrett, and Washington State Gov. Dan Evans (and the traditional blessing of the ship by a prominent Victoria clergyman), Marguerite backed away from her slip with streamers flying in every direction. Members of the "Malahat Marauders," dressed in skins, fired volleys from rifles, and from a number of cannon which had been hoisted to the forward main deck. Thru the din, the Esquimalt High School Band blazed away, under a large banner hung from the ship's bridge--"The British Are Coming - 1775-1975."

The 12:30pm departure had been some 20mins down, and more minutes were lost as the city's fireboat, all nozzles at full force, slowly escorted the ship down the channel to Ogden Point.

Many Victoria residents aboard were dressed in 1890's costumes for the city's annual "Victorian Days" which had concluded only a few days before. They added much colour to the passenger list, as did Scottish bagpipers, some of whom serenaded guests for some time after the ship was underway. On the boat deck aft, a small calliope was fired up (via an air compressor) and, added to the sound of rinky-tink pianos below, created a festive atmosphere that continued to grow as the ship proceeded southward.

Premier Barrett seemed to enjoy the event enormously, and on a number of occasions toured the ship to "press the flesh," perhaps as much from the feeling of good times as from the fact that an election soon may be called in British Columbia.

As the ship neared Seattle, drinking, dancing in the refurbished ballroom, and conversation seemed to proceed at ever faster rates. Overhead, planes from Seattle tele-

(continued on page 12)

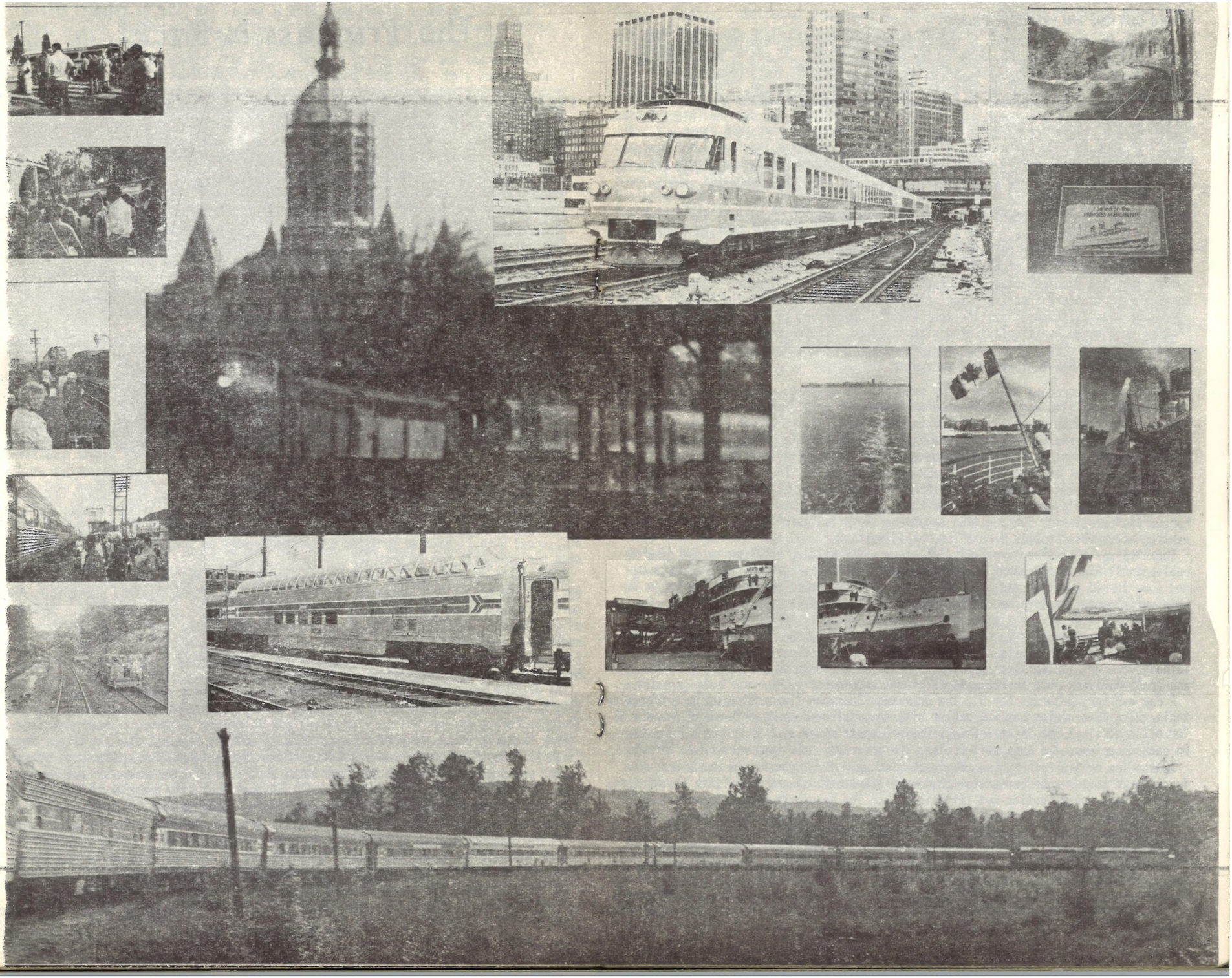


PHOTO CAPTIONS FOR PRECEDING PAGES:

(p. 10, left, top to bottom:) 1) and 2) passengers transfer from northbound STARLIGHT to buses at Kelso, WA, June 1 (see article, p. 6). 3) and 4) passengers reboard the STARLIGHT at Chehalis, WA to continue north. 5) track repair work at Vader, WA, scene of June 1 derailment. 6) (wide photo bottom pp. 10-11) northbound STARLIGHT slowly backs around the wye near Kelso station to become the southbound train of June 1. (large photo, top p. 10:) Train 171 rerouted via the Inland Route pulls into Hartford, CT Union Station on May 17. Consist: 2 PC E8's, Amtrak E8, PC Geep, 5 deadhead coaches, 4 coaches, diner, ex-NH parlor-baggage. Photo by Daniel Sage. (lower small photo:) First refurbished coach-seating Super Dome goes into the consist of the S.F. ZEPHYR at Chicago in early June, for Chicago-Denver service. Photo by Jack Ferry.

(p. 11, top left:) On June 1 Amtrak quietly inaugurated weekends-only Turboliner service Chicago-Milwaukee. With a Chicago elevated train going overhead in the background, a Turboliner pulls out of Chicago, heading for Milwaukee on June 1. Photo by Jack Ferry. (top right corner, top to bottom:) 1) Southbound COAST STARLIGHT winds thru the scenic Cascades of Oregon early in June. 2) Souvenir inaugural decal from the "Princess Marguerite" (see article, p. 9). (6 small photos below:) scenes from the June 2 inaugural sailing from Seattle and return of "Princess Marguerite." Photos by Message Media unless otherwise credited. Cover photos by Message Media.

THE PRINCESS IS BACK! (continued from page 9)

vision stations recorded the event for evening news programs. Alongside, the ship began receiving salutes from large numbers of pleasure craft, drawn both by the return of Marguerite and by the very high 90° temperatures.

Spray from the downtown Seattle fireboat filled the air to announce the ship's arrival, and most of the 1200 sated passengers lined the railings to watch the vessel's triumphant arrival at Pier 48, the Alaska Ferry terminal. The traditional 3-long-blasts salutes were exchanged with state ferries at nearby Pier 52, and also with a steam-driven yacht, one of the last in the U.S. After a complete turn in the harbour, Marguerite made fast. The Scottish bagpipers led dignitaries ashore for short speech making, after which guests were allowed to disembark.

The ship was opened for a private reception until 8:30pm, and then to the general public until 10. Dance bands which had played thru the afternoon remained active, and some torrid gyrating was observed in the ballroom until precisely 10pm, when the ship was cleared, ending one of the longest and happiest parties held in Victoria this year.

The ship was moved to Pier 64 at 6am on June 2, and sailed 8:45am to Victoria, 15 mins late, partially to help accommodate some 900 of the inaugural party who had remained overnight in Seattle. By contrast, many slept much of the way to Victoria, and arrived bleary-eyed in the windy Victoria afternoon.

A day earlier, Saturday May 31, the ship made four short excursion cruises from Victoria. The 10am cruise was for senior citizens, followed by departures at 1 and 3:30 for all comers. A 6pm "Wine & Cheese Cruise" entertained over 1000 invited guests. On each departure, the ship sailed along the international boundary in Haro Strait.

As the 1pm cruise returned, a combination of poor tidal conditions and and a malfunction in engine room communication forced the vessel several feet into the Victoria pier, causing consternation but little damage. The Esquimalt High School Band was playing "Rule, Brittania" at the time, and while few passengers noticed much, the Victoria press played up the event in following news reports.

Passengers and press alike in all instances have reported only high praise for the refurbishing of the vessel; and all predict large lists of highly satisfied passengers during the 1975 season. The refit has banished much of the gloom apparent aboard the last few years. The restored full-size dining room and the large lounges on the former upper cardeck are only introductory improvements, according to Resources Minister

Robert Williams. Additional improvements, including enlargement of lounge areas under the wheelhouse, are being planned during the winter layup this year.

"Princess Marguerite" had arrived in Victoria one week earlier, at 7:50pm Sunday May 25 on a voyage from North Vancouver, where she had spent 5 weeks in drydock and at refit. Her departure from the Burrard shipyard had been 1:15pm, from a slip between CP's new "Incan St. Laurent" railcar carrier, and a ways on which one of the new 457-ft B.C. auto ferries is under construction.

For two hours the ship circled in Burrard inlet off downtown Vancouver to "swing the compass" for adjustment after a winter of idleness. This also gave an opportunity to test the firmness of a new propellor, and to make checks on the steam turbine-electric power plant, which had been idle since Sept. 30, 1974. (The ship had been towed to Victoria on April 17). At 3:40pm Marguerite passed under the Lions Gate Bridge outbound to Victoria just as the ROYAL HUDSON steam excursion passenger train was inbound under the same span from Squamish.

Only a few passengers were carried, including company officials, and members of the media. Arrival in Victoria was marked by the new company's new landing signal, the Morse code letter "X", one long, two shorts and one long, which replaces the former CP Rail long-short/long-short signal. The U.S. motor ferry "Coho" at an adjacent wharf sounded the traditional 3-blasts salute, which was returned by Marguerite, perhaps to the concern of guests at the nearby Empress Hotel, which faces both ferry slips.

Work for the Saturday sailings proceeded day and night during the following week, with some ship's work finished only early Saturday morning, May 31. The Queens Printer at Victoria began cutting of inaugural day posters at three that morning.

* * *

The description of the "Princess Marguerite" party above was written by Glenn Lee since editor Jim Russell missed the event because of the Amtrak incident described in the article starting on page 6. In writing the above, Glenn exercised admirable journalistic restraint, managing to hold his enthusiasm in check and just give us the facts.

In fact, the trip we enjoyed on the Marguerite was one of the memorable events of the decade. It's increasingly rare that onefinds a service--a public service--that is brought off with such skill, verve and style. The British Columbians know how to do it. When one considers the short period of time in which the ship was refurbished, the harbor facilities converted, and all the myriad details of operation taken care of, it is simply stunningly remarkable that the ship's operation should go so smoothly and so pleasantly.

Take the ship's eating facilities, for example. The new owners restored the large dining room that CP had partitioned in half, making part a cafeteria. The room now extends across the full width of the ship, and it is run like the finest restaurant on the ground. The food and the service are impeccable. (For example, the table is set with eight utensils.) Besides the dining room, there is a large, informal cafeteria, plus two outdoor hot dog-fish & chips stands that were grilling the best smelling wieners we've encountered in years.

The departure from Victoria--indeed much of the trip--is a total sensory experience. It's an event that no one who can possibly help it should miss. The 4-hour trip is half in the open sea, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and here one gets the most feeling of the ocean and the possibly roughest part of the journey. The advantage of the Marguerite is that even this portion is smoothed out considerably for the passenger's comfort.

Heading for Victoria, land is close on each side until Port Townsend and the beginning of the Strait is reached. Then the shores are more distant, and on the left the snow-capped peaks of the Olympic Peninsula rise like some mirage out of the blue mist.

The one-way adult fare is $10, $14 round trip. Autos are another $10, and bicycles only $1. Beginning June 6 the ship makes a daily round trip between Victoria and Port Angeles, WA ($2.75 one way) in addition to the Victoria-Seattle trip.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

HIGHER PRICES FOR gasoline are extremely unpopular among Americans. The House on June 11 soundly defeated a bill that would raise federal gas taxes to as much as 23¢ a gallon more depending on future usage. At the same time, the nation's governors, meeting in New Orleans, voted to express displeasure over high gasoline taxes and urged the government to push for conservation without increasing the costs of energy consumption. Also on the same date, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries decided to postpone any increase in petroleum prices until at least Oct. 1..... NEW AMTRAK OFFICIALS named: Paul H. Orr becomes District Sales Manager in Chicago; Timothy G. Brosnahan becomes Director of State and Local Affairs (taking the place of Dave Watts, who is now VP & Gen'l Mgr of Line Operations, and whose job it is to coordinate operations of the four regions of the Amtrak system); and Edward J. Wojtas has been named Editor of Amtrak News, the employee newsletter. Wojtas edited the Rock Island company publication, The Rocket, for 15 years, and is well known among railfan writers and photographers.....

* * *

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION on June 4 issued a regulation requiring states to certify that they've adopted the 55mph spe3d limit..... AM AMTRAK SPOKESMAN has blamed Rio Grande for the missed westbound connection with the S.F. ZEPHYR at Ogden. Rio Grande advanced its departure from Denver by 30mins this spring, and Amtrak thought they could have made the connection, and wanted them to..... A HEARING ON the planned Amtrak station at Richmond, CA will be held on June 26 at 7pm in Council Chambers, Richmond City Hall..... SERVICE TO DALLAS will begin on Amtrak in mid-summer. It will involve splitting the LONE STAR at Fort Worth, with one section going to Dallas and the other to Houston..... AMTRAK'S FIRST TOUR program to Texas was announced late in May: a "Rails & wheels tours of friendly Texas"--8-day vacation in south Texas; and "Gateway to fun, Dallas-Ft. Worth"--a 3-day tour featuring the Six Flags Over Texas theme park..... THERE WASN'T ROOM for more remarks about our recent STARLIGHT trip (see p. 6): we were aware of general satisfaction with the food at every meal. People kept remarking how good and how low-priced it was. At our last dinner we splurged and tried the Tournedos Mexicana, by far the most expensive at $6.95. It was delicious. Finally, when we left Seattle (very busy station on a slow mid-week day) Amtrak had no record of the reservation Washington had made for us, so we were shunted to a room over the wheels--very bumpy ride on BN track..... AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION announced recently that it carried a record number of cars and passengers for the past winter season thru the Easter holiday. March was their highest month on record: 12,064 cars and 33,079 passengers..... NEW YORK COMMUTERS, 1500 strong, were stranded May 30 by a broken third rail in a subway between the Bronx and Harlem at rush hour. Four or more riders were reported overcome by heat..... A BICENTENNIAL EVENT: a steam-powered SKYLINE LIMITED III will run from Alexandria to Front Royal, VA on two July weekends. Info from: NRHS, Box 456, Laurel, MD 20810..... THE DEFEAT OF a transportation funding referendum in Milwaukee in April has caused Amtrak to decline to restore passenger service Chicago-Madison. Meanwhile, Gov. Lucey is pushing for Milwaukee-Green Bay service..... CHICAGO-LAKE GENEVA commuter runs might end on July 1 when the Regional Trnasit Authority takes over commuter service in northeastern Illinois. The RTA would have to buy the service from CNW. Meanwhile, the RTA is making other plans: it announced in June a proposed fare cut and 63 new or expanded bus routes. Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit District received no bids from U.S. manufacturers for 36 bi-level commuter cars it needs, so may have to look for a builder in Canada or France..... A SPECIAL TRAIN leaves L.A. July 1 9am to Las Vegas to publicize a play, "The Doo Dah Gang." The 5- or 6-car train of Overland private cars plus oservation "Hulham" will meet a staged "ambush" in Jean, Nevada, just over the state line. Train runs Santa Fe thru Pasadena.....

AMTRAK'S TURBO SERVICE from Chicago to Milwaukee (see item & photo on p. 11) will run Sundays only, substituting for trains 323 and 326..... CONGRATULATIONS TO AMTRAK'S Jim Bryant (Public Relations, Washington) on his wedding this month..... EMERALD EMPIRE EXPRESS: that's the name already chosen for a proposed additional Portland-Eugene, OR train planned under Amtrak 403-B. $620,000 to underwrite it was passed by the state House of Representatives June 6, and the Senate and Governor must still act on it..... FOREIGN RAIL TRAGEDIES: On May 22 two trains collided in a suburb of Rio De Janeiro, killing one and injuring 150. The same day, a train from Rabat to Tangiers, Morocco, derailed, killing 47 and injuring 200. On June 6, to trains collided at high speed south of Munich, killing at least 35 and injuring 60. Photos of the Munich crash appeared widely in U.S. newspapers....

* * *

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION has decided to go ahead and complete that controversial "people mover" construction at Morgantown, WV, at a cost of $48 million more. Hearing this, Congress's Office of Technology Assessment criticized the Urban Mass Transportation Administration in a report just released, for failing to find ways to introduce such advanced technology into cities. The Office said, "The purpose of the (research) program shouldn't be to develop testtrack hardware, but to solve urban transportation problems"..... "THE CHAMPAGNE RUN": That's the way Amtrak is advertising its Chicago-Detroit Turboliners: "Our Turboliner was just too beautiful to christen, so we're serving the champagne instead." You get a free glass of champagne aboard the train..... PRESIDENT FORD SIGNED the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1975 on May 25, altho he criticzed the section that permits Congress to veto or approve Amtrak plans to modify routes or services planned as part of an improvement program..... THE VERMONT ASSOCIATION of RR Passengers is involved in support of a state Bicentennial project which would include a 17-week summer-fall schedule of tourist travel on a rail-steamboat loop on a route as yet undecided, in 1976, using a steam train, and a side-wheel steamboat on Lake Champlain. Info from George Lerrigo, Polygraphic Lane, N. Bennington, VT 05257..... THE "ROYAL HUDSON" steam rail excursions between North Vancouver and Squamish, B.C. began on May 16, and operate Wed-Sun and holidays. Adult fares are $5.50, and advance reservations are essential. Contact British Columbia Rwy, 1311 N. 1st St., North Vancouver, B.C... READER JOHN FORD of Greensboro, NC verifies that Southern Rwy did put its changes into effect June 1. On June 2 he saw train 6, which consisted of two FP7's, a baggage car, buffet-coach, and 2 heavyweight coaches. No piggybacks..... THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of RR Psgrs presented a lengthy, detailed report on the USRA plan to the House Subscommittee on Transportation & Commerce of the Interstate Commerce Committee a short time ago. Basically, the statement supports the concept of ConFac to own and control Northeast tracks, and strongly supports the USRA proposal for new corridors for passenger trains in the Northeast. Quote: "USRA's proposal to provide 80mph services (which require no track upgrading beyond that which would produce 60mph mainline freight operations) on several routes outside the Boston-New York-Washington corridor seems more sensible than Amtrak's earlier 5-year plan, which proposed to concentrate 100+ mph services on the few corridors now operat3d by Amtrak"..... THE ROHR CORPORATION reported June 6 that it had a net loss for the last quarter, because of a $7,8 million writeoff after taxes of cost overruns on its contract for rapid transit cars for the Washington DC transit system. It will try to get rid of its Mira Loma, CA Rail System Inc. division, which has a car refurbishing contract with Amtrak.....

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"The passenger train corporation will be divided into fur regions, with regional vice presidents in New York, Chicago, Jacksonville and Los Angeles reporting to Watts in Washington."

--San Francisco Chronicle, May 29

(Another result of fuzzy thinking at the head office?)

Rail Canada

CP RAIL IS pulling away from CN policy regarding fluctuating rail fare levels as moves for a "combined" CP-CN passenger service seem to be fading. As of this summer, CP will charge "standard" fares each day Jun 1-Sep 15, up from 4 days of standard and 3 of economy (i.e. intermediate) fares the same period in 1974. CN is remaining with "blue" fares 4 days/week and "white" fares the other 3. The last CN red day was May 29, and red fares will be available again October 1.

DESPITE EARLIER REPORTS from the Maritimes, CP Rail is continuing to run the "Princess of Acadia" on the Saint John, N.B.-Digby, N.S. service, with 3 round trips daily except Sunday, when 2 trips operate. Early info to travel agents notes a possible increase in service frequency this summer if traffic warrants.

AS FORECAST HERE earlier, CN's spring and summer schedule makes the SUPER CONTINENTAL a 4-nights-out train on its trans-Canada trip. CP Rail's CANADIAN still crosses the country with just 3 nights on the rails.

A LETTER COMES from CN Passenger Marketing VP Garth C. Campbell, countering the pro-bus statement attributed to him in the First May RTN (p. 17). Campbell says: "I think that every form of transportation, including buses, has its proper place. If there is any stigma attached to riding buses, it seems to come mostly from the attitudes of local communities. Many of them seem to feel that the withdrawal of rail passenger trains and the substitution of bus service no matter how good, represents a loss of prestige for their community. I can only say that these days, prestige very often comes pretty expensive.

"...continuation of very expensive rail service seems clearly to be a waste of taxpayers' money. In a word, I do not subscribe to the view that the railway is always the most efficient mode of passenger transportation; nor that it should always be the preferred carrier under all conditions." (We will conclude his comments in the next issue.)

RIDE THE FLORIDA SURF ON A NINE DAY TRIP TO THE 1975 N.R.H.S. CONVENTION

Join us as we journey from St.Pete to Knoxville via Amtrak and Southern Ry. Our car will be on the SILVER STAR and the TENNESSEE SPL. In route, you may use the car as your hotel at ALL POINTS, including Knoxville.After 3 nights at Knoxville, we will return on the BLUE RIDGE SPECIAL via Sou.Ry. and N.& W. Portions of the trip will be behind 2-8-2 4501! During a layover at Roanoke, your dinner at Hotel Roanoke is included. You will also have an overnight stop at Washington before returning to St. Pete on Amtrak's SILVER STAR. The trip departs St.Pete at 2:15 p.m. August 26th.,returns St.Pete at 1:05 p.m. Sept.3rd. PASSENGER STOPS AT ALL AMTRAK POINTS FROM FLA. TO D.C. Join us anywhere: FOR RATES AND INFORMATION, CONTACT:

FLORIDA SURF CORP. 2016 N. Village Ave. Tampa, Florida, 33612 (813)932-3887

The Florida Surf will have both porter service and a shower for your convenience. this will be the ONLY THRU CAR FROM THE DEEP SOUTH !

NEW ENGLAND REPORT by Pete Roehm and Dave Foley

ROCKPORT, MASSACHUSETTS VOTED by a margin of 11:1 (292 to 26) to retain train service for the balance of the year. The article in the town meeting was set at the end, which would have made it late Thursday night, but this writer received permission from the moderator and finance committee chairman to move that a motion be made to advance it to the front of the agenda (thus, Tuesday night), since most of the people went the first night to vote for the trains, and that was the night that Dave Gunn could be on hand to field any questions. As well, RTN reader Gene Skorpowski of Medford, MA, was along for assistance. The selectmen (2 of the 5) who were fighting against the service for ulterior reasons related to real estate, made determined efforts to push their case, but their figures were faulty and distorted and, in time, the townspeople could see that their efforts were a bit too much. Thus, at 11:10 that night, after a long meeting covering many petty matters, the standing vote, as above, favored retention of the trains.

THE PREVIOUS DAYS had seen this writer prepare handouts for on-train distribution and the ever-cooperative Gloucester Daily Times printed another of my letters on the train service. Dave Gunn and the MBTA Commuter Rail folks put the three completely refurbished cars on the rush hour trains: 6100 and 6135 (both RDC-1's) ran tandem on the 2-car outbound 4:55pm and the inbound 7:29am, and the RDC-3, 6301, fresh out of the shop, lead out in the afternoon immediately following the first two with the 5:15 and returned in the morning on the 6:56. Public response to the deep lavender colors has been good, and they like the brighter interior look with liberal use of this color on end and center panels and below the windows. Above the windows and the ceiling are white. A deep lavender band encircles the car on the outside where the nameboard used to be. Thus, a battle won but the war is still on.

THE NEXT BATTLE: The MBTA-B&M contract expires June 30, and the Advisory Board of the MBTA has issued a directive that the B&M will sell or agree to sell by that time or the contract is not renewed and then the trains stop outright (original permission granted in 1965) or the B&M runs them gratis pending a new contract. Buses have been lined up should the trains cease. This eleventh-hour crisis is an annual event; thus no one seems too concerned at the moment except that this year's kicker is the rapidly declining cash position of the B&M and the need to get the MBTA into running the service before the tracks and cars deteriorate even further.

THE TRACKS ON the Eastern Route have declined so much that there is now a 35mph restriction between Swampscott (where the Marblehead branch once joined the main line) and Castle Hill (Salem). Ten years ago this was a 60mph line; the Rockport line is still at 30, and it too was 60 in 1965. The Rockport line is that portion also called the Gloucester Branch and running from Beverly Junction to end-o-track in Rockport. This branch is probably the most scenic daylight ride in New England (the MONTREALER is a night run).

GOVERNOR DUKAKIS IS ever more interested in restoring service to Cape Cod, and well-founded rumors have it that FIAT is quite interested in letting the MBTA use a 2-car set of its rail cars for one year free if the "T" would pay for the shipping. These cars are narrow enough to fit into the transit tunnels in the Cape routing.

AMTRAK'S PAUL REISTRUP, when recently in Boston looking at plans for the development of South Station with the Boston Redevelopment Agency threw everything out and now it's back to a new plan. Reistrup would like to see 10 tracks at the station, with 24-foot-wide platforms, all suppressed; buses arriving and departing upstairs; hopefully a tunnel connector in the Central Artery with two Amtrak/intercity tracks and two transit tracks to connect North and South Stations. Maine and New Hampshire legislators are pushing for this connector to facilitate service into their region.

LETTERS (continued from page 3)

ing car? How much time could be saved at station stops if both doors were opened! Also, why is baggage always put off first--leaving passengers in two cars standing in the aisles of two cars for several minutes before they can get off? Let the passengers out first, then those with only a briefcase, handbag, etc. can be "off and running" to meet their friends, get a taxi, etc. No need for them to have to hang around waiting for the more heavily laden to pick out their baggage from a big pile, etc. How much time could be saved by a reversal of the "things before people" philosophy that has pervaded managerial thinking for decades and which helped to hasten the decline of U.S. rail passenger service.

Of course we're all looking forward to the new fast schedules promised by Amtrak once track is upgraded and signal systems modernized, etc. But must Amtrak mark time until this is done? Why not speed things up now by updating our method of handling trains at the larger stations? An hour or more might be cut from the times of the longest runs merely by heads-up station work! Older readers can recall when engines would be changed, sleepers and diners cut in or out at the busiest division points in less than 10 minutes! In 1929, when the Boston-Washington SENATOR was put on, the working timetable allowed just 3 minutes in New York's Pennsylvania Station! Why can't we have such heads-up station operation today? Particularly so since Amtrak trains perform little or no headend work and for the most part they are much shorter than most of the famous trains we all remember so well. The 15, 20 and up to a half hour or more station stops in present Amtrak timetables is ridiculous!

I show below a list of times allowed for stops at large cities in Europe & Japan:

Japan	Osaka	3 minutes	By the Hikari trains
	Nagoya	2 "	
	Kyoto	2 "	
France	Bordeaux	2-3 "	
	Lyons	2-3 "	
	Marseilles	7 "	Cars cut in or out on most thru trains
	Nancy	1-2 "	
Italy	Genoa	3 "	
	Florence	5-8 "	Back-in movement involved. Engine crews on trains with engines at each end (e.g., the SETTEBELLO) must go from head engine to the rear one before leaving the station
Great Britain	Birmingham	2½-3 "	
	Newcastle	2 "	
West Germany	Frankfort	6 "	
	Hanover	2-10 "	Across-platform transfer. One train arrives 5 min ahead of the other, which stops just 2 mins, then leaves 3 mins ahead of the first one. Example: 8:32 ✕ 8:37 8:42 ✕ 8:39

Most of the cities listed are in metropolitan areas of a million or more population which means many passengers on and off any intercity train. Far more than on most any Amtrak train one might name. In Europe and Japan the idea is to "get trains out of town and over the road!" In this country--well? Why can't Amtrak instill such esprit de corps in its station staffs and so speed up schedules today without having to wait until the 1980s to reach the promised Utopia?

Don Steffee

Brooklyn, New York

SUMMER'S PRELIMINARY CONSIST lists show an expanded EMPIRE BUILDER carrying both a dining car and a snack-lounge car. Companion train NORTH COAST HIAWATHA will be shorter, as Amtrak continues to favor the E.B. for thru Chicago-Northwest business.

Express Ads

COLORFUL COLORADO HOLIDAY one-week escorted tour from San Francisco & Sacramento by private GWT pullman & lounge cars attached to Amtrak's S. F. ZEPHYR. Comprehensive Colorado sightseeing includes D&RGW's SILVERTON and RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR. Three departures: June 7 & 28, Aug. 23. Brochure on this and other rail tours available from GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, San Francisco 94105.

INDEPENDENCE LIMITED III will operate behind 4501 July 3 Knoxville-Norton, VA thru Natural Tunnel, July 4 Norton-Roanoke via Bluefield, July 5 circle trip out of Roanoke, July 6 Roanoke-Alexandria. Also psgr extra to Knoxville departing Roanoke after Mountaineer arrives from west on July 2nd (limited). Write RNRH, P. O. Box 681, Roanoke, VA 24004 or call (703) 366-5211 or 366-2169.

YOU'RE INVITED: TWO RAILFAN FUN-TRAINS: #1 MEXICO (Jan 17-Feb 2) Mexico City, Veracruz (streetcars), Oaxaca, Puebla, Trip of Thousand Wonders. #2 WINTER SNOW (Feb 17-March 6) 8191 miles, Moffat Tunnel, Donner Pass, Rogers Pass, Cross Canada in Winter, Montreal, Adirondack, New York City, Philadelphia--write for details: MIDWEST TRAVEL SERVICE, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City, OK 73110.

Maine Central, Burlington and Pullman Uniform Buttons 70¢ each or all three $2.00. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

Ontario and Western, Maine Central and Florida East Coast Uniform Buttons 70¢ each or all three $2.00. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

WANT low-cost H.O. model R.R. locos, cars and car parts, especially Pennline-HObbyline-Varney plastics. Please advise condition and prices asked. Also HAVE some for sale. W.E. Spafford, 9511 Woodlawn, Portage, MI 49002.

THE BIGGEST, BEST, MOST EXCITING CONVENTION in the history of railroadiana!!! Phila. Sheraton July 31, Aug 1,2,3. National Association of Timetable Collectors Members and non-members welcome. Over 75 dealers will be selling, trading & buying everything in railroadiana. Rich (Timecard) Clover will open his inner sanctum of long-hidden gems of the railroad past and offer same for sale. Come one & all to the Bicentennial celebration in the City of Timetables. Write Bob Russell, 400 S. Chester Pike, Apt 6-B, Glenolden, PA 19036 for details.

RAILROADIANA DEALERS: get your table reservations NOW for the National Convention of the National Association of Timetable Collectors to be held at the Downtown Philadelphia Sheraton. 3 big sessions Aug 1 and Aug 2. Thousands of rail fans expected, extensive media advertising dampaign planned. Tables 3' x 6' $10 each for NAOTC members, $20 each for non-members. For reservations and information contact Bob Russell, Apt 6-B, 400 S. Chester Pike, Glenolden PA 19036 (215-412-7251).

DID YOU MISS 1974? We're having a special back issue sale in which you can order the entire year of 1974, 24 issues of RTN for just $6 postpaid (mailed all in one package 3rd class mail). Read about all the new trains: BLUE RIDGE, SAN JOAQUIN, expanded INTER-AMERICAN, BLACK HAWK, EXPO 74, "last" SUPER CHIEF, LAS VEGAS CELEBRITY TRAIN, ADIRONDACK, EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS, BLUE WATER, etc., plus such features as the readers vote for Cleveland service; the editor gets hassled on the SFZ; Glenn Lee's "Christmas on the Near Totterings" and much, much more. Quite possibly your best rail reading bargain. Order from Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

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